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ABSTRACT

This paper examines some of the problems associated with interpreting metonymy, a figure of speech in which an attribute or commonly associated feature is used to name or designate something. After defining metonymy and outlining the principles of metonymy, the paper explains the differences between metonymy, synecdoche, and metaphor. It is suggested that an account of conventionalized and creative metonyms, and the underlying principles common to them, must include both descriptive and analytical considerations. A relevance-theoretic framework is investigated with a view to finding further explanatory insights. Exemplification of the role and functions of metonymy in narrative fiction is presented in texts by Charles Dickens and Virginia Woolf. The outcome of the study shows that rhetorical, linguistic, and relevance-theoretic frameworks are all needed if metonymy, and the process of interpreting its meaning, is to be fully accounted for. (Contains 13 references.) (MDH)

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Interpreting Metonymy

Anne Pankhurst (DAL)

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INTERPRETING METONYMY

Anne Pankhurst (DAL)

Abstract

This paper discusses some of the problems of interpreting metonymy, a commonly used but little understood trope. Initial clarification of the differences between metonymy, synecdoche and metaphor is proposed, using common examples. It is suggested that an account of conventionalised and creative metonyms, and the underlying principles common to them, must include both descriptive and analytical considerations. A relevance-theoretic framework is investigated with a view to finding further explanatory insights. Exemplification of the role and functions of metonymy in narrative fiction is presented in texts by Charles Dickens and Virginia Woolf. The outcome of the study shows that rhetorical, linguistic and relevance-theoretic frameworks are all needed if metonymy, and the process of interpreting its meaning, is to be fully accounted for.

1. Introduction

1.1 Definitions of metonymy.

Metonymy is frequently found in normal, everyday language, particularly in conventionalised examples such as:

Have you done your Chomsky? (the author for the work).
The strings played superbly (instruments for agents).
We'll have the Bordeaux (area of production for product).
The White House has refused (place for the authority).
That green anorak is coming (garment for wearer).
We could do with some fresh blood (part of body for the person).
Small is beautiful (general for specific).

Various attempts (Schofer and Rice 1977, Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Nash 1989) to describe metonymy provide lists like this, creating a taxonomy of examples. This categorising fails to explain why the trope is used, its functions in discourse and how it achieves effects. Metonymy is generally not well known, or easily identified, in spite of its being in common use. It is frequently confused with two other common figures of speech, metaphor and synecdoche, as in, for example, the non-literal use of the word *ship*.

Firstly, as metonym, *ship* can stand for a place in which people live and work over a period of time, signifying a large group of people found together in one ship as in *The entire ship rejoiced*. The referent in spatio-temporal location may thus be extended

from the scene to the characters of a narrative. Metonymy is generally agreed to mean the substitution of one term for another, on the basis of some material, causal or conceptual relationship between terms within a single domain (Preminger 1975). It enables the extension of a physical reference into more abstract connotations. Hence, *ship* acquires different connotations associated with the emotions or actions of the people aboard. The closely related figure of speech synecdoche is generally seen as a special kind of metonymy (part for the whole) and for the purposes of this paper will be conflated with it. In synecdochic description, a part of a ship can stand for the whole but within the limits of physical features as in *There is a sail entering harbour*.

Secondly, as metaphor, *ship* can be substituted for a concept such as the State, or an organisation such as a business, an educational institution, e.g. *The ship of state needs the right person at the helm* and *Our chairman runs a tight ship*. The actions associated with a ship may be part of a generally accepted conceptual metaphor 'life is a journey' (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980) as in *sailing through stormy seas*. Metaphor is a substitution of one term for another on the basis of an analogy between the two terms, which come from different domains. In this example, the domain of 'life' is transferred to the domain of 'transport by ship' which it is perceived to resemble.

1.2 Some principles of metonymy.

The example of *ship* demonstrates that in the case of both metaphor and metonymy there is a gap between the linguistic form and the semantic meaning of the word or phrase. Attempts to separate metonymy from metaphor raise interesting questions about the boundaries between the two tropes. The discussion in this section of the paper will, however, focus on the generally agreed principles and uses of metonymy.

Metonymy is primarily referential in character, relying on causality as a linking principle between the term and its referent, which is in the material world (Schofer and Rice 1977). Another shared principle is contiguity, essentially spatio-temporal contact, primarily in conventionalised figures such as place for person (e.g. *The White House has refused*) but extended to any shared linguistic or extra-linguistic code (Jakobson 1956), or semantic associations (Eco 1979). This kind of contiguity is context-linked, as can be seen in the example *Have you done your Chomsky?* which is not perceived as meaningful outside its specific environment, an Applied Linguistics course.

In some metonyms a kind of ellipsis is used to achieve semantic effects. For example, *We'll have the Bordeaux* is easily understood by anyone who knows that Bordeaux is a kind of wine produced in a specific area, and that the speakers are probably in a restaurant. In a shared context, the full literal version such as *We'll have the wine from Bordeaux* is felt to be unnecessary. Creative examples are seen in political or advertising slogans in which inference plays a considerable part. *Small is beautiful* carries more attention-taking effect than a literal version of the same proposition such as *It is desirable to plan for small-scale development*. The reader infers meaning through his knowledge of the socio-economic code.

The principle of understanding through a process of inference brings us to a relevance-theoretic explanation of figurative language (Sperber and Wilson 1986b). Metonymy is no more than a means of communicating the speaker's intention, and is

understood through the same principle (inference) as other figures of speech such as metaphor, hyperbole and irony. The brief examples given, however, are largely decontextualised, and the explanation does not account for special effects derived from using metonymy. The commonly used metonymy of clothes for wearer, as in *That green anorak is coming* (above) has a range of effects recoverable only from knowledge of the immediate context of the utterance - feelings about the colour, the garment, its wearer, shared opinion etc.

In this paper I shall discuss whether adding a relevance-theoretic account of metonymy to traditional rhetorical and linguistic accounts provides a more adequate explanatory framework. In two examples taken from narrative fiction I shall use a textual analysis as a basis from which to assess whether applying relevance theory makes a contribution to understanding the process of interpretation. In doing so, I shall consider the effects achieved by metonymic discourse (longer text whose organising principle is metonymic) and consider whether these are different from those found in short examples.

2. Relevance Theory

2.1 The principle of relevance.

Relevance theory is a theory of verbal communication developed with the purpose of accounting for the meaning of utterances. It is claimed (Sperber and Wilson 1986a) that the principle of relevance is an explanatory generalisation which applies without exception to all ostensive-inferential acts of communication. Participants in overt acts of communication do not need to be consciously aware of 'rules' of relevance in order for relevant communication to take place. The assumption is that since human cognition is relevance-oriented, there is an expectation that every utterance is relevant. The speaker is presumed to intend an utterance to be relevant; the hearer is presumed to know this before interpretation begins.

The combination of contextual effect and processing effort is fundamental to relevance theory. Contextual (or cognitive) effects are changes in the shared cognitive environment, brought about by the speaker's intention and the inferences drawn by the hearer. They may be derived from different types of knowledge, lexical, logical or encyclopaedic. Achieving contextual effect, or sharing cognitive knowledge through the act of communication, is linked to the amount of effort required of the hearer as he interprets meaning.

Since the degree of relevance depends on the two factors of effort and effect, it increases if less effort brings greater effect, and decreases if more effort brings less effect. Processing effort accesses a range of strong and weak implicatures, which are crucial if optimal relevance is to be achieved. If an utterance represents literal truth or a conventional use of figurative language, we may speak of strong implicature. When considering creative figurative language, however, a wide range of weak implicatures is accessed. More processing effort is required in the latter case, bringing commensurably greater cognitive effects.

2.2 Optimal relevance.

Wilson and Sperber (1993) claim that all ostensive-inferential communication is governed by a principle of optimal relevance shared by speaker and hearer. It goes like this: an optimally relevant utterance must be worth the hearer's attention, and put the hearer to no gratuitous processing effort in achieving its effects. Relevance is not solely the responsibility of the speaker. The hearer, who expects relevance, plays an active part in resolving difficulties caused by ambiguity, linguistic encoding or context. In other words, linguistic and encyclopaedic knowledge interact during interpretation, whether the expression is literal or figurative.

A more controversial aspect of the principle of optimal relevance is that the first satisfactory interpretation is the only satisfactory interpretation, and is the one the reader chooses. Gratuitous additional processing is said to reduce the relevance of an utterance. In the interests of achieving their communicative goal, writers frame their text in such a way that the first plausible interpretation reached by the reader is the one they wanted to convey. According to the principle of least effort, it is assumed that the reader stops when he reaches what he believes to be the intended meaning. At this point, a satisfactory range of intended effects will have been reached although not necessarily all those available. In the case of figures of speech, a more creative reader will have to put more effort into disambiguation and contextualisation of referents which are not readily accessible. His reward will be that he will gain more effects, and more relevance.

In the process of reference assignation, disambiguation of linguistic encoding and the need for contextual enrichment may present difficulty for the interpretation of an utterance. The suitability of referents is evaluated in a certain order by the hearer or reader, starting with the familiar and proceeding to the less familiar. Although this is a generalisation, there is particular interest here for the case of metonymy. When metonymy is used creatively, a great deal of its effect derives from unexpected deviance from literal truth, or the 'gap' between linguistic form and semantic implication, which arouses the reader's curiosity and invites him to search for a less obvious referent. This is particularly true of narrative fiction but not exclusive to it. It has been noted in examples such as emblematic names e.g. *The Iron Lady*. The willingness of the reader to be imaginative in responding to the writer is essential if the text is to make its full effect.

2.3 Interpretive resemblance.

We recall that all tropes depend on a relationship between terms. Metonymy depends on material, causal or conceptual relationships. It is one of the possible representations of the connections between thought and linguistic expression, albeit one which is not always transparent. Sperber and Wilson (1986a) suggest that a relationship between terms may be either descriptive - representing in virtue of truth conditions; or interpretive - representing in virtue of resemblance. They call the latter *interpretive resemblance*, using this term to explain all figurative language. Shared implications explain the relationship in any figure of speech such as metonymy, metaphor, hyperbole, etc. where there is a clear difference between the form of the utterance and its pragmatic implications. The reader assumes that there are some

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identifiable characteristics in common, and the same interpretive abilities and procedures are invoked as in the interpretation of literal expressions.

The relationship between the form of a conventionalised metonymic utterance and its referent requires relatively little interpretive effort because of the highly and often specifically referential character of metonymy. There is a close resemblance between the expression and the implicature, as may be seen in the frequent metonymic use of clothing to stand for the person. Although the clothes do not literally resemble the person, they are closely linked by logical and conceptual ties. In the case of an example such as *That green anorak is coming*, constraints on the mobility of an anorak enable prompt disambiguation and access, through inference, to the implicature, that the speaker has some kind of attitude about the wearer of the anorak, which she wishes to convey. An interesting question is whether this is true for longer text in which metonymy is a structuring principle whose effect lies in the accumulation of, say, descriptive detail, or is used creatively to achieve distinct poetic effects.

3. Exemplification of metonymy in literary texts.

I propose to discuss the interpretation of metonymy in the light of exemplification from narrative fiction, using rhetorical and linguistic analysis, and to follow this with considerations based on relevance-theoretic principles. The examples chosen represent different styles of fictional writing and different ways of using metonymy as a structuring principle.

3.1 Dickens: *Bleak House*

The opening pages of Dickens' novel *Bleak House* are frequently cited as an example of metonymic discourse in fiction. By metonymic discourse is meant discourse which uses metonymy - or substitution of one term by another in close material, causal or conceptual relationship - as a fundamental structure for conveying meaning. The novel abounds in examples, including frequent use of synecdochic detail, so that metonymy is a structuring principle throughout the narrative. It is part of the linguistic and conceptual framework which enables interpretation.

In this text, the implied narrator is George Rouncewell, a family servant, who is patrolling Sir Leicester Dedlock's London mansion in the early hours of a snowy morning after Lady Dedlock's disgrace and flight. His gloomy premonitions of disaster are supported by his observations.

> There is no improvement in the weather. From the portico, from the eaves, from the parapet, from every ledge and post and pillar, drips the thawed snow. It has crept, as if for shelter, into the lintels of the great door - under it, into the corners of the windows, into every chink and crevice of retreat, and there wastes and dies. It is falling still; upon the roof, upon the skylight, even through the skylight, and drip, drip, drip, with the regularity of the Ghost's Walk, on the stone floor below.
>
> (Dickens, *Bleak House* Ch.58:855)

A wealth of realistic detail has, by this stage of the novel, informed the reader of scenes, plots and characters, but runs the risk of confusing him by its sheer mass. The problem for the reader is to decide which elements of the descriptions and narration are important enough to be selected from among the rest. It is known that one of the ways in which Dickens marks themes is by using figurative language. He foregrounds important ideas by a combination of tropes and syntactic variations central to the development of given and new information, and leading to the creation of rich contextual effects.

In the immediate context of the most recent parts of the narrative, meaning is achieved by grounding potentially figurative effects in the reality of cold, invasive weather. This is generally agreed to be a feature of metonymic description and is based on the gap perceived to exist between the syntactic or lexical form and the semantic implications, which has to be filled by inference. The first clue to this interpretation is evident from the beginning of the novel, in the description of the London fog. With this established as a frame, the state of the weather functions as a clue to the reader to draw inferences. The reader's encyclopaedic knowledge of the significance of houses for their owners, the destructive effects of thawing snow, and the allusions to death create the immediate contextualisation.

The abundance of synecdochic detail in this passage conveys a degree of authorial choice in that the representation of the house is made through selection of visually prominent architectural features as parts for the whole. *Portico, eaves, parapet*, etc. all represent a huge mansion. A fictional scene is provided, enabling the reader to situate the context within the novel and, for Dickens' nineteenth century readership, with reference to a known world. A first reading may be thought to provide adequate interpretation. The strong implicature of the details in their literal sense of parts of a house seems to situate the scene, but further effort makes the reader aware of a wide range of weak implicatures created by the juxtaposition within the paragraph of literal with figurative language.

Several features move us away from the representational aspect and into the symbolic world created, from the start of this novel, through the move out of physical environment into interpretations of it. The selection of details is neither random nor all-encompassing. The single semantic field 'house' contains all of these elements and many more which the author ignores for his present purposes. Those which have been chosen and used as the focalising device are metonymic in character because through them the physical domain moves into the abstract. In the social code of this world, large houses with prominent architectural details stand for wealth, power and a sense of invulnerability. Then, the inferred metonym 'house for social status' is superimposed on a second complex metonym, the thawing snow. Literally bad weather which may destroy the house as it infiltrates the structure, the snow stands for forces in society, and events, which are figuratively attacking the representation of the house and what it stands for. Further, the snow is personified in the phrases *crept as if for shelter* and *wastes and dies*. The reader is reminded of his earlier fear that Lady Dedlock will meet this same fate (as indeed she does). This context is strengthened by the reference to Sir Leicester's other great house, Chesney Wold, with which the reader is already familiar. Its legend of a woman's death foretold by the sound of footsteps on the Ghost's Walk refers to Lady Dedlock.

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The syntactic forms which Dickens uses include variants on normal prose discourse which evoke the poetic rhythms of an oral tradition of story-telling. The fronting of a series of prepositional phrases (*from the portico, into every chink... upon the skylight even through the skylight)* is enhanced by repetitions which have the effect of moving the synecdochic detail into a more abstract domain. Further poetic effects such as synaesthesia (a sensation of another kind suggested by one experienced) link the visual image to the relentless sound of the drips and by inference to the unpleasantness of thaw. Dickens wishes the reader to understand the symbolic importance attached to combining the house and the snow in a complex chain of metonyms which function with the syntactic form as a strong focalising device.

The passage is structured by using the principle of contiguity at more than one level. Firstly, connection with the rest of the novel is established through recalling the architectural details of the house, and the effects of London weather. Then, these spatio-temporal features are extended through the metonymy of cause-and-effect. A whole way of life, i.e. of the wealthy family represented by the mansion, is threatened. It works like this: 'house' stands for its owners, 'snow' stands for destruction, therefore the effects of snow on the house stand for the destruction of the owners. At another level, metonymic discourse is the trigger for an explosion of meaning as the reader is led away from the known world into abstract values and representations. 'Snow' has a multivalent implicature here; its function is to ground figurative elaboration in the reality of physical experience.

The question arises of whether there is any interest in adding a relevance-theoretic framework to the interpretations already available through rhetorical and linguistic analysis. From the relevance-theoretic point of view, the interpretation of the text must be subject to the principles of effort and effect. The reader's initial encounter with the text is based on the assumption that he will understand what the writer intends to communicate. The conventional synecdoches and perception of physical reality speed the process, acting as clues to what the reader is meant to understand. The first effect is to communicate clearly that snow is literally invading the house in a way which is common knowledge. The reader might stop here, as this is a plausible interpretation. There are clues in the text which encourage him to believe that the first interpretation is inadequate. But a further consideration is whether the use of metonymy here can simply be denied in favour of a literal reading, or explained as gratuitous, albeit interesting aesthetic effects. This interpretation might well be adequate insofar as the reader is satisfied that this is no more than an episode in the narrative, a moment of authorial comment which is easily accessible because the referents are all known to him already. The need to process the metonyms, by assigning referential value and enriching the scope of their linguistic form, reduces the relevance of the authorial communication by imposing gratuitous effort.

In response to this criticism, we may refer to Sperber and Wilson's (1986b) analysis of figurative language as 'Loose Talk'. Poetic effects such as metaphor, metonym and other figures of classical rhetoric are explained as a joint responsibility for speaker and hearer, or writer and reader. It seems possible in this example from Dickens to extend what the authors say about metaphor to metonymy:

> In general, the wider the range of potential implicatures and the greater the hearer's responsibility for constructing them, the more creative the metaphor. ... the hearer can go beyond exploring the immediate context and the

> background knowledge directly invoked, accessing a wider area of knowledge, entertaining ad hoc assumptions which may themselves be metaphorical, and getting more and more very weak implicatures.
>
> (Sperber and Wilson 1986b:168)

In the exemplification from *Bleak House*, the inferences made through the metonymic details are of great importance to understanding the scene and Rouncewell's premonitions of the death of Lady Dedlock, leading the reader to anticipation of the narrative. The potential implicatures reached through the metonymic discourse are, in relevance-theoretic terms, weakened but widened, offering more scope for communicating the author's intention. Relevance is created by shared properties. Rouncewell's observations as he walks around, the reader's knowledge of the linguistic structure of ghost stories, the content of the narrative, brought together through the metonyms.

3.2 Virginia Woolf: *To the Lighthouse*

The second example is an episode from a novel which appears to be structured in terms of metaphoric rather than metonymic discourse. Woolf's writing tends to place greater emphasis on metaphor and on aesthetic qualities of style than on forwarding the narrative. To find a clear example of metonymy is rare, but the episode of Mrs. Ramsay's necklace shows that Woolf, in this case, contextualises her highly figurative discourse and highlights its implied reality through using a striking metonym.

In this text, Mrs. Ramsay is dressing for dinner and allows her children Rose and Jasper to choose which necklace she is to wear. The narrator has shown that her mind is preoccupied with other things - the dinner itself, her desire to please the principal guest William Bankes, the late return from an outing of other children and guests, the antics of the rooks outside the window. Her thoughts are divided between her identity and duties as a hostess, her reflections on nature and people, and her role as mother. Spatio-temporal contiguity between Mrs. Ramsay, the children and the necklace in the first instance, and contiguity in the social code shared by author, narrator and reader provide the context which makes the referents accessible. This contextualisation leads the reader away from perceiving the necklace only as object, and towards other implicatures.

> But which was it to be? They had all the trays of her jewel-case open. The gold necklace, which was Italian, or the opal necklace, which Uncle James had brought her from India; or should she wear her amethysts?
>
> 'Choose, dearests, choose,' she said, hoping that they would make haste.
>
> But she let them take their time to choose: she let Rose, particularly, take up this and then that, and hold her jewels against the black dress, for this little ceremony of choosing jewels, which was gone through every night, was what Rose liked best, she knew. She had some hidden reason of her own for attaching great importance to this choosing what her mother was going to wear. What was the reason, Mrs. Ramsay wondered, standing still to let her clasp the necklace she had chosen, divining, through her own past, some deep, some buried, some quite speechless feeling that one had for one's mother at Rose's age.
>
> (V. Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* Ch.16: 307)

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The narrative does not move forward until the choice has been made. The pause allows the reader to assign referential value to the object by various assumptions and inferences. The necklace has a number of strong implicatures. It is part of Mrs. Ramsay's outfit for the evening, thus standing for the self-image of the middle-class woman and associated with the social ritual of dressing for dinner. The reader is conscious of aesthetic pleasure in the objects (*'gold .... opal .... amethysts'*). The principal action of the scene, selecting the necklace, is encoded linguistically in the imperative *'Choose, dearests, choose,'* modified by two clauses *'hoping that'* .... and *'But she let them take their time'* .... The act of choice is controlled by Mrs. Ramsay, and stands metonymically for the power of the mother over the children.

The choosing of the necklace, foregrounded among the other elements of the narrative briefly, is a focalising device for one of the themes, i.e. Mrs. Ramsay's intuitive understanding of her daughter Rose with whom she has close links. The mother's acceptance of the choice forms a subtle metonym of cause and effect, standing for the transmission of mutual affection between mother and daughter. The use of Free Indirect Discourse gives access to Mrs. Ramsay's secret reflections and her explicit attribution of meaning: *'.... divining, through her own past, some deep, some buried, some quite speechless feeling that one had for one's mother at Rose's age.'*

The choice of Rose's preference rather than Jasper's encapsulates the mother's greater intuitive understanding of her daughter rather than her son. It represents the recurrent subtext in the novel that Mrs. Ramsay does not have as clear an understanding of men as of women. Rose is thought by her mother to attach great importance to selecting the necklace: *'.... was what Rose liked best, she knew.'* The necklace stands for an umbilical cord which neither mother nor daughter is ready to cut. The necklace, once chosen, becomes a metaphor, the link between the child and her mother. From the single domain of the mother's evening dress, it transfers into the two domains (jewellery and psychological dependence) of metaphor, but grounded in metonymy.

If the passage is examined in the framework of relevance theory, the verbal phrase *'Choose, dearests, choose'* satisfies both criteria for optimal relevance, i.e. for a minimum of processing effort there are maximum contextual effects. Within the fictional world, the children show that they have stopped at the first relevant interpretation, a literal one. The reader, however, influenced by the modifying clause *hoping they would make haste*, achieves a greater degree of relevant meaning. Thus, he finds clues in the adjacent text where the problem of reference to the characters' inner thoughts is disambiguated by explanatory comment: *'(Rose) had some hidden reason of her own for attaching great importance to this choosing what her mother was to wear.'*

The metonym, juxtaposing Mrs. Ramsay's overt wishes and hidden feelings, becomes the clue by which the reader is encouraged not to stop at the first interpretation. More processing effort is required than if the text simply read *Mrs. Ramsay allowed her children to choose a necklace and fasten it round her neck before dinner*. But a wider range of implicatures is accessed relevant to the narratorial point of view. These include the satisfaction felt when handling or wearing a beautiful object, the social importance of formal dress for dinner, the devotion of a girl to her mother and the mother's understanding and love for her, the memory of past experience, the dominant status of Mrs. Ramsay.

In this example, the need for an inferential interpretation of the metonym outweighs the value of a strictly rhetorical explication, and is in fact proposed by the author through the embedding of the metonymic object in text dominated by flashes of Mrs. Ramsay's 'stream of consciousness'. On the authorial side, the intention is clearly to signal that the text works at levels beyond the literal, for reasons to do with the coherence and the consistency of the narrative, the characterisation or the aesthetic concerns. Correct interpretation is enabled by metonymic representation bringing together a number of important concepts.

4. Conclusion

Investigation of metonymy as it occurs in everyday language indicates that a number of underlying principles distinguish this figure of speech from metaphor, but enable us to conflate it with synecdoche. In considering metonymy in 'literary' language, i.e. narrative prose fiction, similar principles are perceived. The concurrent presence of substitution, passage from the physical to the abstract, elliptical linguistic form, strong referentiality, contiguity, contextuality and inference have been demonstrated. The process of interpreting metonymy, or accounting for the gap between its linguistic form and semantic implications, is clarified by emphasising the importance of context and inference or, in relevance-theoretic terms, effect and effort.

The two examples from *Bleak House* and *To the Lighthouse* show that metonymy may be interpreted by means of analysing its linguistic form and its semantic implications in a given context. In this respect, the longer texts confirm the principles noted in examples of metonymy in everyday language. The first interpretation provided by the process of analysis and an understanding of the principles may be insufficient for full understanding. At this point a relevance-theoretic approach clarifies the process by which we can gain further insights, i.e. the pursuit of weak implicatures. Clues are given by both Dickens and Woolf as part of their communicative intention - if followed, they lead to a cornucopia of effects proper to figuratively enriched language. A successful approach to the meaning of these texts requires exegesis by rhetorical and linguistic means, and the use of the relevance-theoretic framework to give additional information about the process of interpretation.

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